PROGRAM SUMMARY
US Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System (IOTWS) Program

Strengthening "end-to-end" tsunami warning capabilities in the Indian Ocean region— from advanced technologies to resilient communities.

US IOTWS Program focus countries

What is the US IOTWS program?

In response to the December 2004 tsunami disaster, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) launched the United States government's Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System (IOTWS) program. Through this two-year, $16.6 million effort, scientists and experts from the United States will share their technical expertise, provide guidance, and help build early warning system capacity within the Indian Ocean region so that governments and communities will be able to detect and prepare for tsunamis and related coastal hazards.
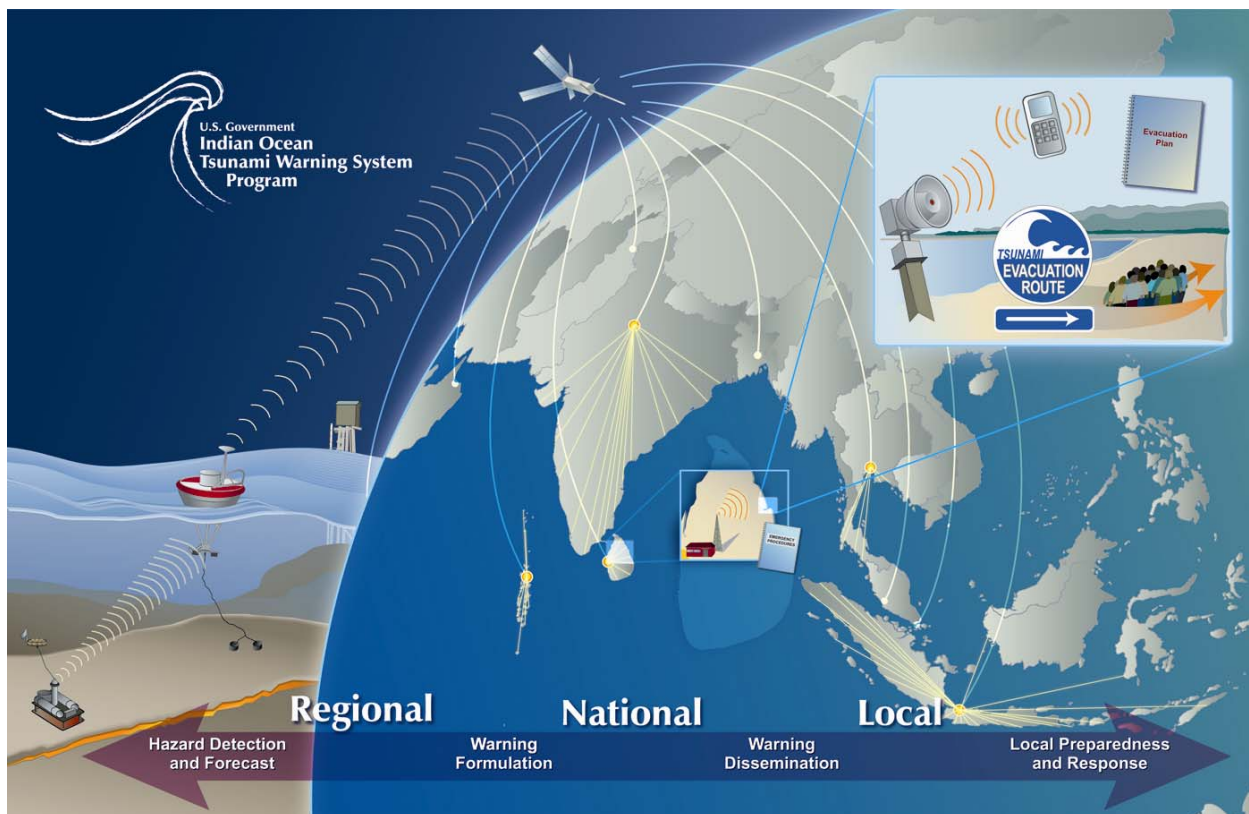
Who is involved?

The US program involves several partner agencies with specialized expertise and access to resources for the region. These agencies include USAID, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), U.S. Department of Agriculture/Forest Service (USDA/FS), and U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA). USAID's Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDM/A) in Bangkok manages the program with the coordination support of a contractor that serves as the Program Integrator—a consortium of technical organizations including the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC).

These partners are working very closely with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the United Nations agency that has lead responsibility for developing the Indian Ocean's regional tsunami warning capabilities, as well as individual national and local governments to improve the capacity of their disaster warning systems. The US team is also collaborating with other donor nations, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector to ensure all priorities for the IOTWS are adequately addressed.

Where is the US IOTWS program working?

In addition to providing support for regional-level warning system components, our work includes targeted technical support to Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, and the Maldives—the countries most severely affected by the December 2004 disaster.

Regional — Hazard Detection and Forecast
National — Warning Formulation
Warning Dissemination
Local — Local Preparedness and Response

End-to-End System. *To be truly effective, a warning system must ensure continuity from the initial stage of detecting a tsunami, to issuing warning messages to authorities and the public, to ensuring that communities at risk are properly prepared. In cases where tsunamis originate close to the shore, the entire process could take as little as 15-30 minutes.*

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Will the US program only focus on tsunamis?

Because the Indian Ocean region faces many hazards involving similar early warning systems, the US program is "multi-hazard" and is designed to help countries simultaneously detect and issue warnings for cyclones, sea swells, floods, and earthquakes.

What are the key activities of the US IOTWS program?

Working in partnership with the international community, national governments, and others, the US IOTWS Program is addressing hazard detection, prediction, warning, communication, and preparedness at all critical levels. Major activities include:

- **Regional** support will occur primarily through the IOC and support the design and development of regional observation and communications systems, tsunami warning center capacity building, warning formulation standards and protocols, and data-sharing strategies;
- **National** support for disaster management organizations, planning, policy and regulations, communications and notification systems, and hazard mapping and modeling;
- **Local** support for a TsunamiResilient Communities program and coastal hazards mitigations; and
- **Cross-cutting** support for region-wide training, educational exchanges, and knowledge-sharing information systems on tsunami and related disaster warning systems.

Where can I get more information?

Visit **www.us-iotws.gov** for information on upcoming activities, our progress, technical documents, and related materials.

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